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Message Text

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17
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 OMB-01 IO-10 ACDA-10 EB-07 AID-05 OES-05

ERDA-07 /124 W
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P R 140430Z OCT 75
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1711
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL MADRAS
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 13712

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, IN
SUBJECT: MRS. GANDHI ON INDO-US RELATIONS AND NUCLEAR TESTING

THE GOI MADE AVAILABLE ON OCTOBER 12 THE FULL TEXT OF
AN INTERVIEW OF PRIME MINISTER GANDHI AND GEORGE
EVANS OF THE LONDON SUNDAY TELEGRAPH. OF INTEREST
WERE THE FOLLOWING EXCHANGES ON INDO-US RELATIONS AND
INDIAN NUCLEAR TESTING:

QUOTE
QUESTION: ON RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES, IT IS WIDELY
BELIEVED IN INDIA THAT AMERICAN MONEY HAS BEEN FED TO RIGHTWING
OPPOSITION PARTIES TO OPPOSE GOVERNMENT'S SOCIALIST
POLITICS. LEAVING FORD AND GOVERNMENT ENTIRELY OUT
OF IT DO YOU BELIEVE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT CIA HAS MEDDLED
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INDIAN AFFAIRS?

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P.M. THIS IS A RATHER DIFFICULT QUESTION TO ANSWER. WE READ ALMOST DAILY ABOUT CIA'S OMNIPRESENCE AND ITS MYSTERIOUS OPERATIONS. WE OURSELVES DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES TO COLLECT SUCH INFORMATION BUT SOMETIMES THEIR MOVEMENTS HERE ARE A LITTLE SUSPICIOUS AND WHAT WE LEARN ABOUT THEIR DOING IN OTHER COUNTRIES DOES CAUSE US ALARM HERE. SO FAR AS GENERAL INDO-US RELATIONS ARE CONCERNED WE HAVE ALWAYS TRIED TO WORK FOR FRIENDSHIP AND WE HAVE RECEIVED A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF ECONOMIC AID FROM THEM. BUT POLITICALLY IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF OUR ASSESSMENT BUT THE ASSESSMENT OF THE UNITED STATES WHAT THEY THING ABOUT THIS REGION AND WHAT IS OUR PLACE IN THEIR SCHEME OF THINGS.
MR. WILLIAM BUNDY WROTE RECENTLY IN THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS QUARTERLY THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD SET ALONG FAR BETTER WITH AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES THAN WITH DEMOCRACY AND IT WAS CONSIDERATION OF GLOBAL STRATEGY WHICH PREVAILED IN SUCH MATTERS.
INDIA'S POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT HAS BEEN A SORE POINT WITH THEM WHICH THEY HAVE MENTIONED TO US. AND EVEN IN MY FATHER'S TIME THERE WERE ATTEMPTS BUILD UP, WHAT THEY CALL MORE "ACCEPTABLE" LEADERS EVEN WITH THE CONGRESS PARTY. WE CAN ONLY HOPE THEY WILL REALISE THAT COUNTRIES DON'T LIKE BEING PUSHED AROUND BY ANYBODY NOT JUST BY THEM BUT BY ANY COUNTRY AND THAT STABILITY IN INDIA IS A FACTOR FOR PEACE IN THIS WHOLE REGION.

QUESTION: PRESIDENT FORD HAS BEEN CRITICAL OF INDIA AND HAS NOW ANNOUNCED THAT HE WILL NOT BE COMING HERE THIS YEAR. HAS THIS SOURED RELATIONS A LITTLE FURTHER?

P.M. I WOULD NOT SAY THAT I DON'T WANT TO BOAST BUT WE ARE A LITTLE MATURE ABOUT THESE THINGS. IT DID SEEM ODD TO US THAT HE SHOULD MAKE THAT REMARK WHILE ON HIS WAY TO CHINA. I GET A VERY LARGE NUMBER OF LETTERS FROM AMERICANS SUPPORTING US.

QUESTION: IN VIEW OF INDIA'S ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, HOW CAN RECENT NUCLEAR EXPLOSION BE JUSTIFIED. ARE FURTHER TESTS PLANNED?

P.M. SURELY IT IS BECAUSE OF OUR ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES THAT WE MUST TURN TO SCIENCE. WE DID NOT HAVE OUR EXPERIEMENT TO MAKE A BOMB BUT TO SEE WHETHER IT COULD BE USED FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES
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AND DEVELOPMENT. THE COST WAS QUITE SMALL AND CAME FROM REGULAR BUDGET. AS TO WHETHER THERE WILL BE MORE TESTS THAT DEPENDS ON WHAT THE SCIENTISTS STILL HAVE TO FIND OUT.

QUESTION: IS THERE ANY INTENTION EQUIPPING THE COUNTRY WITH A NUCLEAR DETERRENT?

P.M. I DON'T THINK SO.

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END QUOTESCHNEIDER

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